

A2 c02T c H ffj c4 oΔ

A modification of the A.A. Group Inventory in the pamphlet “The A.A. Group”

The following questions, compiled from A.A. shared experience, may be useful in arriving at an informed group conscience. Groups will probably wish to add questions of their own:

1. What is the basic purpose of our district?

- Help the alcoholic who still suffers. Communicates Area info to the groups. Help us understand the Area motions. Connects our groups to different committees.

2. What more can our district do to carry the message?

- Expanding into Desoto County – remote areas, country area. Seem to be somewhat ignored because of their location and Spanish speakers. We don’t have a remote community committee. We have an accessibilities committee – but no one has been chairing it for two years.
- Carry the message back from the Area meeting to the groups.
- Provide workshops – sponsorship, things about carrying the message.
- Treatment / Accessibilities are separate committees in this District. If we had more information about what it is and what it does, maybe more people would be interested. Maybe a workshop to explain.
- We do have the current chair explain what the committee does, but anyone not at the district meeting doesn’t hear that. A service fair could help.
- Have we ever had a dinner event? Dinner event to bring people into District?

3. Is our district attracting alcoholics from different backgrounds? Are we seeing a good cross-section of our community, including those with special needs?

(Tradition 3: Does our district create a welcoming environment for any new person regardless of age, gender, race, religion, politics or other distinctions?)

- Not doing as much as we could do mainly because we don’t have that accessibilities committee. Location, language – whatever barriers – we don’t have anyone to help cross those barriers. Question: How will you do it?
- One person’s home group is hoping to help the people who are already interested. Perhaps making inroads into senior living spaces.

A2 c02T c H ffj c4 oΔ

- There are 130 groups in our district. A relatively small percentage of groups have a GSR at the District.
- Question: Are your DCMs communicating with the groups to encourage participation?
- Some DCMs are covering 30+ groups – that’s too many. So many groups have only a few attendees because of starting new meetings (groups splitting up.)
- Some people simply don’t know – It’s the DCMs job to encourage people to have interest. There is interest but so many new people don’t even know about the service structure. The DCM can encourage people to have an alternate.
- The DCMs can encourage GSRs and group contacts to have an alternate GSR or backup contact looped and so there is continuity in the communication and group service commitment.
- Encourage members to just come to district even if they don’t have a position, just to see what it is.
- Encouraging existing GSRs to join a committee.
- We have the committee chairs give presentations sometimes but it seems that we don’t get much response from those. Another member says that it would be good to get more information on the role and responsibilities of that position and the committee members’ roles and responsibilities. More details.
- We have had service fairs in the past and that seems like a good idea.

4. Do new members stick with us, or does the turnover seem excessive? If so, why? What can we as a district do to retain members?

(Concept III: Within the confines of our 12 Traditions, and our group conscience decisions, do we grant our trusted servants flexibility to exercise vision, leadership, and to bring new ideas to their positions?)

- DCM has a lot of GSRs – and only contacts – I provide information to them also. A lot of groups don’t have the Concepts on the wall. She has a contact at every one of her meetings. Encourage GSR to bring an alternate along to the district meeting and bring the info to them also if they can’t attend. Let members know they can attend just as an AA member.
- No problem with autonomy. An involvement problem. The most important part of one’s sobriety is their service. We need to make it exciting and interesting. Some participation in committees has no sobriety requirement. GSRs and sponsors need to encourage members to be part of service. In a way that makes it interesting. Tell them your sobriety will be on fire if they do service work.

A2 c02T c H ffj c4 oΔ

- You can have a job and be on a service committee. Explain the small amount of time that could be their participation level.
- Suggestion: There is a list of services provided by GSO. Maybe use the list to enthusiastically show groups all the things that GSO in NY does for the Fellowship. Or make a similar list of services provided by the district. Or have a real-life experience to share like “Mary” was in a treatment center and our committee carries the message there. Mary got connected with AA there and now is out, has a sponsor and is sober now 6 months. Providing information on how district services benefit local AA. It’s easy to hold a title like GSR or DCM, but ask yourself if you are doing the best you can for AA. That’s why we’re here to do the best we can for AA.
- Gave a woman the name of the corrections person who then told the woman that they were ‘full’ of volunteers and did not give any additional information.
- There are opportunities on Treatment.
- There is only one women’s corrections facility and they only allow one meeting a week. But there are other non-corrections facilities.
- Recommendation: Communicate the challenge at the district meeting. The committee chair can then respond in person directly to the inquiry. Communicate! There is often a breakdown in communication, even within committees.
- For some facilities, you need a year sobriety to participate at the facility. But there is no sobriety requirement to show up to the district committee meetings. Shared that she doesn’t always push herself to encourage others.
- Having “soldiers” to take flyers to senior facilities and other such communities. Those members could have just a little sobriety and it’s a small commitment in terms of time and effort.
- Some people have night vision issues. We have a large number of people with such senior issues.
- Put out flyers “High Pay” and when they ask what the pay is say, “long-term sobriety”.
- He was told in very early sobriety that he had to get involved in service. We have to make it known that we HAVE TO DO SERVICE.
- Should we start having nametags at the District meeting and have someone greet at the door to make you feel welcome. He loves the idea of nametags.

**5. Do we emphasize the importance of service.sponsorship?.Or.9__legacy.
sponsorship? How effectively? How can we do it better?**

A2 c02T c H ffj c4 oΔ

(Tradition 12: Do we as a district devote any time helping new members to learn more about our Traditions and providing new ways to support our spiritual foundation (anonymity)?

Concept XI: Do we elect the best qualified leaders for our district?)

Part of 3-legacy sponsorship is to prepare members for service responsibilities.

- We had an online workshop on service sponsorship – announced it quite a few times beforehand. It seemed helpful. Was helped by the Area Outreach committee.
- One woman is here because of that workshop and now has a service sponsor. Her sponsor didn't take her through the Traditions, so she learned about service in that workshop.
- We can start developing a culture of sponsoring in all three legacies.
- If the new person comes in and doesn't know they should have a sponsor and then what service is. Let's sponsor all three legacies.
- As GSRs we can bring literature to the group, encourage the group to learn about the Traditions. As GSR, can announce the Sponsorship pamphlet. That can help people get more interested. If someone has already "been there done that", encourage them to get involved again.
- Suggestion: We have many, many pamphlets produced by AA World Services. You can even download a single copy digitally from <https://aa.org>. Introduce various pamphlets to your sponsees, to your home group, to potential GSRs to help carry the message of service. Let literature carry the message too!

6. Are we careful to preserve the anonymity of our district members and other A.A.s outside the meeting rooms? Do we also leave what they share at meetings behind.(privacy)?

(Tradition 11: If we create flyers or announcements, are we careful to use only first names and last initial, and no photos of members' faces?

Concept XII: As guardians of A.A.'s Traditions, are we ever justified in being personally punitive? Do we always try to treat each other with mutual respect and love?)

- The advent of social media has made anonymity more difficult – tainted it. Uploading photos onto FB in relation to AA – 11th Tradition violation.

A2 c02T c H ffj c4 oΔ

- District minutes and website info has last initial only through a scrubbing process. Email list is a Bcc for district correspondence.
- Social media – she never puts that she is a member of AA. Putting a medallion on FB could have the appearance that the person’s friends are also in AA.
- The 11th Tradition says that every individual member should have as much personal anonymity as they want.
- Tables at events where attendees wanted to take a picture for the newsletter – people have to back out of the picture. They can photo the table display only.
- He talks to a person privately about social media anonymity breaks.

7. Does our district emphasize to all members the value of keeping up with the kitchen, set-up, clean-up and other housekeeping chores that are essential for our Twelfth Step efforts?

(Tradition 7: Do we rely upon one or two people to do the group chores?)

Tradition 11: Do we protect the reputation of AA through our respect for outside entities?)

- She volunteers way too much, she says. She has started asking can we get help with setup? We’ve had more participation now since we started asking.
- Churches sometimes ask that we not use profanity in the meeting. It’s the same as leaving the place dirty. They are our host.
- Over the years, churches have made a request about not flicking cigarettes out in the yard or parking lot. We are each responsible.
- Have a service position to pick up cigarette butts at the district meeting.
- We should remind people to leave it better than you found it.
- Do we want people to think AAs are a disrespectful bunch of slobs?

8. Are all members given the opportunity to speak at meetings and to participate in other district activities? [Also.reference.Concept.V.-.minority.opinion]

(Concept I: Is the “collective conscience” of Alcoholics Anonymous at work in our district?

(T2/C2: Does our district understand the term “Informed group conscience”? Do I respect and comply with group conscience decisions, even when they are not what I think is best for the district?)

- She was nothing but welcomed into this district. The GSR sharing was helpful and welcoming. She gets a lot of good info from the GSR sharing before the meeting. She feels her voice is respected in district.

9. **Mindful that holding office is a great responsibility not to be viewed as the outcome of a popularity contest, are we choosing our officers with care?**

(Concept VI: Do we trust our elected trusted servants and allow them to make tough decisions and even mistakes? Or do we sit back and quietly criticize those showing up to do the work?)

Concept VIII: Do we allow our elected committee chairs, secretaries, and other officers the opportunity to be a leader, and the ability to appoint, assemble or run their own committees? (Within the confines of appropriate bylaws and the Traditions)

Concept X: How well defined are our service position descriptions and/or bylaws? When we elect a trusted servant, do we make sure they understand the specifics of their responsibilities?)

- When only one person stands, are we sure that's the best person?
- When someone stands there are qualifications. Autonomy allows the district to waive one or more qualifications if the voting body thinks that is the best thing to do in a particular situation.
- Note: Autonomy does not mean it's appropriate to violate Traditions. The only vote an individual member has is in their own home group, not every meeting they attend regularly. Tradition 4. If they are a representative, then they have a vote in the district or area for their group or groups. As a DCM you are not telling the groups what to do, but you are providing information and education, including through literature, and suggesting that their group take that information into consideration. You are serving the groups, not ruling over them.
- Concept IX taught her about staying in her lane. We have to let groups do what they want to. We don't have a right to tell every group what to do. We can educate lovingly with information.

10. **Are we doing all we can to provide an attractive and accessible meeting place?**

A2 c02T c H ffj c4 oΔ

Check back to questions 3 and 4 – can our meeting place help in any way? (What makes the district meeting attractive? Enthusiasm, clean and accessible location (including restrooms), welcoming attitude, a place to learn and feel like a full participant.)

- One thing she doesn't see a lot is having a greeter. That is an important job. You are the face of AA to a newcomer especially. She didn't get a GSR packet. She thought maybe the Service Manual was all she needed.
- When there is a new GSR, the DCM should go to that person and tell them who they are and what a DCM is for!
- The GSR workshop is good.
- Our place is wheelchair accessible.
- What about acoustics? Hearing aids magnify small noises. Please be quiet when others are speaking.
- Come closer to the front to hear better. Maybe have a couple of chairs close to the front for those who have hearing difficulties.
- Maybe invest in a microphone and speaker.
- Would it help to change the meeting time to a day time to help people who have trouble driving at night?

11. Does our district do its fair share toward participating in the purpose of A.A.—as it relates to our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service?

(Concept I: Is our district aware of current General Service Conference policies, literature, and agenda items?)

Answer this next question to yourself: Have you thoroughly worked the 12 Steps with a sponsor?

How many of you can say with confidence that you have enough understanding of the Traditions of AA to apply them to group functioning?

... understanding of Concepts to apply them to District, Area, and General Service Conference and General Service Board functioning?

Are we: Attending Area assemblies, sponsoring, learning and teaching Traditions and Concepts?

- We tried to do a Concepts workshop but no interest.
- Try a Concepts play / skit. Worked great at the SASSA.

A2 c02T c H ffj c4 oΔ

- All the other items here we do a good job in the district. We presented and discussed all the Conference agenda items.
- One of the things that we did... we have 12 committees – each month we did a Tradition. But it didn't give the committees enough time to go to the groups.
- There needs to be a balance so that people can talk to each other – spending so much time on sharing on a Tradition that we didn't have time to have people share about what's going on with their groups. Maybe a Tradition meeting at a different time than the district workshop?
- District 4 presents and discusses Traditions and Concepts workshops in a two-year rotation.
- Use the literature! Twelve Traditions Illustrated, Twelve Concepts Illustrated, et al.
- Groups can help - Work a literature meeting into the meeting schedule (group level). Something like the 2nd meeting of the month is literature.

12. What has our district done lately to bring the A.A. message to the attention of professionals in the community—the physicians, clergy, court officials, educators, and others who are often the first to see alcoholics in need of help?

(Tradition 8: Does our district clearly understand the difference between work in the alcoholism field (i.e., therapist, drug/alcohol counselor, sober mentor) versus carrying the message of A.A.?

Tradition 10: When an outside issue arises, how do we, as a district, handle it?)

- Phenomenal job by the PI/CPC committee.
- The assisted living community is a huge untapped resource for carrying the message. We can participate in those areas.
- We tried to get into high schools several times this year. They were in prior to COVID. The Governor changed and new laws made the schools gun shy about violating new laws or rules. It has to be approved by the school board and PTA, etc. Want to try to get into the hope classes with the PE teachers. Still trying.
- We just participated in a convention of high school guidance counselors. So many useful conversations there and handed out a lot of cards and contact information. The conventions are expensive, and we have to be prudent. That convention opened a crack for us to get our foot in. When anyone hears about anything like that let PI/CPC know about it. Most important – nurses and law enforcement.
- How about the Employers? Employee Assistance Programs – Construction, Nursing, etc. PI/CPC Chair likes this idea.

A2 c02T c H ffj c4 oΔ

- Are we individually willing to let our employers know about AA?
- Suggestion: DCMs and GSRs could possibly bring certain pamphlets and other service literature to the attention of group members; ask members to share that information with their own doctor, their own employer and other professionals they may be in contact with to help with their awareness of what alcoholics anonymous does.

13. How is our district fulfilling its responsibility to the Seventh Tradition?

(Tradition 7: Is our district self supported by our home groups and district members? Both monetarily as well as physically? Or do we rely upon one or two people to do the group chores?)

- All good on the budget.
- She thinks it's strange to pass the basket at a service meeting. She thinks the District should be self supporting from the groups.
- Some districts pass the basket to just support the food, etc.
- District 5 doesn't do that. The District basket supports other things in the district.
- Can we do events and dinners? Didn't have enough funds to put one on this year.
- Our current practices disallow having raffles to raise funds.
- Sell event/dinner tickets to have the event be self-supporting.

Suggestion: Use the A.A. Guidelines for events to understand how to have the dinner be self-supporting.